stamps issued since independence to honour distinguished Indians and foreigners;

(b) the criteria on the basis of which decisions to issue such stamps are made; and

(c) whether Government would consider the proposal to have a group of eminent elder citizens to advise it on these selections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) The number of commemorative stamps issued since independence to honour distinguished Indians and foreigners is 441 and 58 respectively.

(b) New proposals for issue of commemorative stamps are examined in the light of existing guidelines given in the Statment (*See* below).

(c) There is a Philatic Advisory Committee which has on its body, eminent citizens from the fields of philately, art and culture and which examines proposals received for issue of commemorative/special stamps on the basis of the guidelines' stipulations. This Committee has the Minister of Communications as its Chairman.

Statement

Guidelines

1. Proposals should be taken up well in advance say about two years before the proposed date of issue alongwith full details to enable proper examination and obtaining recommendations of the Philatelic Advisory Committee.

2. A stamp on a living personality may not be issued.

3. The personalities on whom commemorative stamps may be issued should be of national or international importance and the occasion may be the Birth Centenary/10th/25th/50th or 100th Death Anniversary.

4. Not more than one stamp may be issued on the same personality/Monument/Building/Institution or Organisation.

5. A stamp on an Institution, Building, Monument etc. may be issued on its centenary/125th Anniversary/150th Anniversary etc.

6. Events of very important national or international character only may be considered for issue of stamps.

7. Out of the commemorative/special stamps issued every year those on personalities should not normally exceed 25%. Atleast 25% stamps every year should be on popular themes like flora and fauna, arts and culture, etc.

Electronic network in Andhra Pradesh

548. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of proposal of Andhra Pradesh Government for taking up on a pilot basis an integrated application for providing services to citizens over electronic networks involving some departments of the Central Government also;

(b) whether Government propose to extend financial assistance for the project to Andhra Pradesh Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of India is supporting the following two pilot projects for:

(i) Development and deploment of multi-purpose, multimedia, scaleable information warehouse, being implemented by Centre for Development of Advance Computing (C-DAC), Pune.

(ii) Community Information Network for Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC), being implemented by CMC Ltd.

(d) Does not arise.

कश्मीर के संबंध में अमरीकी राजदूत के विचार

549. **श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया:**
श्री कपिल सिब्बल:

क्या **प्रधान मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत में अमरीका के राजदूत श्री रिचर्ड एफ० सेलेस्टे ने हाल ही में अपना यह विचार व्यक्त किया है कि कश्मीर केवल भारत का आंतरिक मामला नहीं है बल्कि यह अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्दा भी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार ने अमरीकी राजदूत द्वारा इस प्रकार से अपना मत व्यक्त किये जाने को गम्भीरता से लिया है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो इस पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है;

(घ) क्या सरकार ने इस मत के औचित्य के सम्बन्ध में अमरीका से बात की है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो कब और इस पर उनकी क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल): (क) भारत में अमरीका के राजदूत श्री रिचर्ड सिलेस्टे को यह कहते हुए 6 अक्तूबर, 1998 की प्रेस रिपोर्ट में उद्धृत किया गया कि "हमें विश्वास है कि भारत और पाकिस्तान के मतभेदों को केवल सीधी द्विपक्षीय बातचीत द्वारा हल किया जा सकता है।" जम्मू और कश्मीर से संबंधित प्रश्न के उत्तर में उन्हें यह कहते हुए उदधृत किया गया कि "मुझे यह विश्वास नहीं है कि कोई इसे पूरी तरह से आंतरिक मामले के रूप में देखता है" और यह कि इसका क्षेत्रीय और सार्वभौमिक प्रभाव है।

(ख) से (घ) जम्मू और कश्मीर राज्य भारत संघ का अभिन्न भाग है। भारत और पाकिस्तान दोनों सभी मसलों को शिमला समझौते के अन्तर्गत द्विपक्षीय बातचीत द्वारा हल करने के लिए वचनबद्ध हैं। यह अमरीकी सरकार को दोहरा दिया गया है और हमने उपर्युक्त वक्तव्य पर स्पष्टीकरण मांगे हैं।

(ङ) 7 अक्तूबर, 1998 को नई दिल्ली स्थित अमरीकी दूतावास ने कहा कि राजदूत की टिप्पणी संदर्भ से परे उदधृत की गई थी। 9 अक्तूबर को अमरीकी स्टैट डिपार्टमेंट ने यह स्पष्ट किया कि जम्मू और कश्मीर के संबंध में अमरीकी नीति में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ है इसके अतिरिक्त यह भी कहा गया कि राजदूत की टिप्पणी अर्थगत मामला है और अमरीकी परिपेक्ष्य में महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है सरकार ने इस स्पष्टीकरणों को नोट कर लिया है।

Discussion of US President with Pakistani Premier

550. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports in the Tribune of September 10, 1998 captioned. "Clinton discusses Kashmir issue with Sharif", reporting that the US President discussed Kashmir and peace and security in South Asia, with Pak-Premier on phone and invited the latter to US, to sign CTBT;

(b) if so, what was the Pak-response to this invitation; and

(c) whether Government had reviewed the peace and security situation in South Asia in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. "The Tribune" newspaper of September 10, 1998, published remarks reportedly made by a US spokesman regarding a telephonic conversation between the US President and the Pakistan Prime Minister. The newspaper reported the White House Spokesman as having stated that the US President discussed "the economic situation in the region, non-proliferation matters, peace and security and Kashmir" with the Pakistani Prime Minister and invited the latter to the United States.

(b) The Prime Minister of Pakistan is understood to have met the US President in New York later in September 1998. It is also reported that he will be visiting